Leadership Portfolio 2012

Professor Joan Marques
Alley Cheung
12/5/2012
Acknowledgements

This portfolio would not have been possible without the guidance and the help of several individuals who in one way or another contributed and extended their valuable assistance in the preparation and completion of this study.

First and foremost, my utmost gratitude to Dr. Joan Marques, Director of the BBA Program and Assistant Professor of Management in Woodbury University whose sincerity and encouragement I will never forget. Dr. Marques has been my inspiration as I hurdle all the obstacles in the completion of this course.

Dr. Jia-Yi Cheng-Levine, for her unselfish and unfailing support in promoting professional writing skills as an Adjunct Professor of Writing.

My classmates, particularly Maria Orozco and Ben Campbell, for the valuable insights they have shared. They have all been really great to work with, especially for the service project we did together.

Raida Gatten, Kathleen Glover, & Diane Zwemer, librarians of Woodbury University, they have painstakingly helped me to get the literature such as references and journals I needed.

The Administrators of the Faculty of Business and Management, for their untiring effort in encouraging the teaching staff to pursue professional growth. Likewise the staff of the Dean’s Office for their relaying every communication sent in my behalf.

Last but not the least, my family and the one above all of us, the omnipresent God, for answering my prayers for giving me the strength to plod on despite my constitution wanting to give up and throw in the towel, thank you so much Dear Lord.

Alley Cheung
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements........................................................................................................................................................................... 2
Lollipop Moments.................................................................................................................................................................................. 4
My Story ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 5
My Values and Vision, Passions & Purpose ................................................................................................................................. 7
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator .............................................................................................................................................................. 8
Professional Resume ............................................................................................................................................................................... 12
Class Activities

 Chapter Outlines ........................................................................................................................................................................................ 15
HBR Articles Critiques ........................................................................................................................................................................... 35
Leadership Assessment Case Critiques .................................................................................................................................................. 37
Leaders vs Managers .............................................................................................................................................................................. 42
The Service Project Presentation ......................................................................................................................................................... 44
APA Paper 1: Li Ka Shing ................................................................................................................................................................. 59
APA Paper 2: Operation Gratitude: A Reflection on Leadership Practices and Organizational Behaviors ............................................................ 65
Critical Textbook Critiques ................................................................................................................................................................... 73
Key Leadership Insights .......................................................................................................................................................................... 73
100 Day Leadership Implementation Plan ........................................................................................................................................ 80
Alley

You bring a very unique, international perspective to this class. I am very impressed with how well you connect your unique personal experiences to the subject matter of this class. I appreciate your point of view and your passion for business.

You are a shy individual, but one can easily tell you are a great classmate to have and speak to.

You are an intelligent person, who is also a great listener.

You are very meticulous and prepared. You are also very insightful.

You are a genuine and inspiring person who is hard-working.

You are quiet yet impressive, because English is not your first language, yet you are very articulate!

Thank you for all the interesting ideas you shared with us.

You are helpful and pleasant to be around: an accommodating and hardworking individual.

Your quiet intelligence amazed us, true. You managed to bring us insights so new. Your views on life are very mature. You will be successful in life: that’s for sure!
My Story

My name is Alley Cheung. I entered Woodbury in Fall 2010, and I attained my Bachelor of Business Administration degree in May 2012. I found out about this university through my younger brother, who was applying to transfer here. Before I came here to study, I was working as a manager in a travel agency, and I found that I must get a diploma in order to go further. By the time when my brother was transferring to this school, I thought it was a great chance for me to continue my study and at the same time I could take care of him.

After I finished my undergraduate studies, I was planning to leave the States and return to my home town. However, few days before I left, I went to see Dr. Joan Marques with my brother to discuss about his academic plan. It was a meeting which changed my whole career plan. I realized that if I chose to return to Hong Kong for a job, I might not have another chance to come back to the States and study for a master degree. Since I did not want to regret in the future, I turned in my application before I left. I returned to take the MBA program in Woodbury because I believed that the school would provide me the best post-graduate experience ever since. When I received the admission letter, I knew that I have made the right decision.

I lived with my parents and my brother in Hong Kong. We are Chinese but there are some differences between mainland China and Hong Kong. The most obvious differences are the languages we speak. People speak Cantonese in Hong Kong but Mandarin in China.

I have years of experience in travel industry. I know the industry well, from the operation of a tour to the management level of a travel agency. This is because I’ve been working part-time as a tour guide since I was 16 years old. With years of customer service experience, I know how to listen to the customers’ needs, and also how to handle problems. They taught me that different people have different needs during the tour, from hotel service to shopping experience. Some
opinions are good, and some are complain that I must deal with at once. These are something that we cannot learn from textbooks.

Later on, when I was working as a manager in a travel agency, I learned more about the operational level of a company organizing tours and the goods that we sold was service. Tour guides are the ones who bring service to the customers, and the company is the one which plan the trip, including transportations, hotels, visas, dining, and sightseeing spots, etc. I am capable to find a balance between the customers’ needs and the company’s goals, with the in-depth understanding of how to maximize customer satisfaction and minimize the cost.

Language is my strength. In Asian countries, it is very important for people to speak the same language, this will highly increase the chance for a business. Hence, with the knowledge of Cantonese, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Shanghainese, some Japanese, French, and fluent English, I have the privilege over others. These are the common languages spoken in most Asian countries. This is similar to people who can speak both English and Spanish in the United States, as a phenomenon that people tend to trust someone who speaks the same language with them. It not only increases the confidence of the customer, and can also reduce the misunderstanding caused when two different languages are used.

Living in a multi-cultural country is also my strength. It provides me with the chance to know people from different countries, and hence have the chance to see them in an unbiased way. Different cultures have different practices and traditions that sometimes it may be very different from our own cultures. Under such living environment, I’m comparatively more open when seeing any cultural practices that look strange to my culture.

I had different goals in the past. However, none of them were certain. It is hard for international student to get an H-1 visa in order to work in the States, so that the most possible thing to happen on me will be going back to Hong Kong and start my own business. With the capabilities from my past experiences, and the education from Woodbury, I can foresee that starting up a business will be easier for me than others. Since what I am going to bring back home is the professional knowledge in management field that the education system from Hong Kong does not provide. Apart from theories, the knowledge I learn from Woodbury is more in-depth about ethical leadership, which is so inspirational that other institutes may not be able to provide.
My Values and Vision, Passions & Purpose

My personal core values include family, personal growth, stability, wisdom, and trust. Knowing that my family needs me and I need the emotional supports from my family, I am always motivated to work, to study, and to live a happy and fulfilled life. Secondly, I realize that no one is perfect, and there is always space for me to improve myself. I learn to define my ethics, which I try not to violate my ethical standings, in order to make myself a “better person” I wish to become. At the same time, personal growth also means improving my knowledge, potential and awareness, which I work this out by having a lifelong learning plan. Moreover, I am a person who prefers stability than challenges. This does not mean that I will avoid changes and challenges; I would rather say that I am willing to take challenges which can provide long-term stability to my family which they will have nothing to worry about. Only with wisdom, I will be able to identify what is good or bad, right or wrong, as a result to build my own moral and ethical standards. Lastly I think trust is the most important thing in relationships among people. This is because if there is no trust, nothing can establish. For example, there will be no real friendship if you do not trust your friends; people cannot find good employees if they do not trust the persons they employ; and if there is no trust between business partners, a partnership cannot be established, etc.

My vision is to be happy and to make others happy in both my personal and professional life, while at the same time not to go against my ethical stances when dealing with others. I will do this by working continuously with my personal development from learning and maintaining positive relationships with family, friends, and colleagues. To find peacefulness within myself by looking inward and my mind to pursue knowledge, creating balance among all of my responsibilities. As influenced by Confucianism, I believe that whenever I have problems in making ethical decisions, I would put myself into the other side’s situation and see if it is appropriate to do so. This is something above legal issues that we are the ones to judge whether it is right or not.

My passion is to understand the way people think in respond to what they do, especially about my family. Family is always the most important thing in my life. I enjoy providing them with a good living environment, love and laughter. This is also my purpose in life, that I must have a rewarding career in order to ensure their livings. In order to achieve this, I need to perform well in study first, and then head to a successful profession in the future, while I must not spend all of my time in working, but sparing it with my family so that this will not go against my purpose.
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

My Personality Type

Alley Cheung

ME - Introverted Intuition with Extraverted Thinking
Introvert (33%)

- Think/reflect first, then Act
- Regularly require an amount of “private time” to recharge batteries
- Motivated internally, mind is sometimes so active it is “closed” to outside world
- Prefer one-to-one communication and relationships

iNtuitive (50%)

- Mentally live in the Future, attending to future possibilities
- Using imagination and creating/inventing new possibilities is automatic-instinctual
- Memory recall emphasizes patterns, contexts, and connections
- Best improvise from theoretical understanding
- Comfortable with ambiguous, fuzzy data and with guessing its meaning.

“The only real valuable thing is intuition.”
Albert Einstein
**Thinking (50%)**

- Instinctively search for facts and logic in a decision situation.
- Naturally notices tasks and work to be accomplished.
- Easily able to provide an objective and critical analysis.
- Accept conflict as a natural, normal part of relationships with people.

**Judging (56%)**

- Plan many of the details in advance before moving into action.
- Focus on task-related action; complete meaningful segments before moving on.
- Work best and avoid stress when able to keep ahead of deadlines.
- Naturally use targets, dates and standard routines to manage life.
Career Choices

Technical/Science

Computer Programming
Natural Science
Teaching Natural Science
Engineering

Management

Management
Entrepreneurship

Social Services

Law
Librarian

Thank You :)
Professional Resume

Alley Cheung

Address: 2021 Peyton Ave Apt 201, Burbank, CA 91504
Cell: (818) 561-9919
Email: cheungalley@gmail.com

I am an outgoing and energetic young professional, with years of solid experience in marketing and customer service, along with strong customer facing and administration skills. Now seeking a career that fits my professional skills, personality, and tendencies in respond to new challenges and contribute to effective marketing of an organization.

Education

Woodbury University – Burbank
Expected Graduation Date: August 2013

- Master of Business Administration
- GPA: 4.00

Woodbury University – Burbank

- Bachelor of Business Administration: Management
- GPA: 3.68
- Honors: Cum Laude
  Dean’s List (Spring 20101, Fall 2011, Spring 2012)

Leadership experiences

Global Business product extension marketing plan
POSPA Change Project of an ERP system
Project of a Perfume Launch Party
New e-business proposal – Apps Development
Operational Management project – Information Technology Department
Capsim Business Simulations
Affiliations

Delta Mu Delta – International Honor Society in Business 2012

Experience

Woodbury University  MBA Tutor - Burbank – November 2012-Present

Vickies Construction & Engineering Co. Limited  Assistant Manager – Macau - May-August 2011

- Experience with many of the projects and people working within the company.
- Experience in planning, conducting, and evaluating recruiting process.
- Assist with the staffing of projects under supervision of experienced workforce.
- Interface with customers for technical inquiries.
- Understand business policies and procedures.
- Work closely with the marketing team
- Ensure proper maintenance of company assets.
- Help in recruiting and staff management.
- Attain all management development programs.

Golden Speed Travel Services  Manager - Hong Kong - 2009-10

- Skills of risk management
- Experiences in organizing tours
- Excellent customer relationship management

Sinomart International Ltd  Asst to Director - Hong Kong - 2007-09

SinoGift Industries Ltd  Asst to Vice President - Hong Kong - 2007-09

- Worked with major wholesale and retail stores in the United States
- Meeting with trading partners gave me an idea of their marketing strategies
- Experiences in cost control in the manufacturing level of goods produced by our own factory
- Cooperating with R&D department to design custom-made products
- Experienced in negotiating for a contract
- Strong in persuasion and negotiation skills
Leadership Portfolio

Golden Speed Travel Services  
Tour Guide - Hong Kong - 1997-03

- Customer oriented experience prepared me well in taking care of customers' needs in every dimension

Skills

Office skills
Office and records management, database administration, event organization, customer support, travel coordination

Computer skills
Microsoft productivity software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc), Adobe Creative Suite, Windows OS

Interpersonal skills
Good communication skills, effective listening, flexible and adaptable, appreciative, attentiveness, problem solving, decision making skills, team player, leadership qualities, and positive attitude.

Language proficiency
Fluent writing and speaking skills in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese

References
Available on request
1.1 Putting First Things First

Key idea 1: Stewardship

Stewardship implies five things, which includes:

- Fealty – the ability to view a command as a trust rather than a mean of personal gain.
- Charity – the idea of giving priority to interests of others.
- Prudence – the consideration to safeguard the future than focusing on present advantage.
- Accountability – the sense of responsibility to the whole.
- Equity – rewards are measured based on contribution rather than power.

Since there are stewardship obligations to myself, my family, and also to a business and a community, I learned to think about myself if I am really a steward by asking myself questions suggested in the book. The key idea is to think before performing a certain task, I need to clearly understand that I am working from the standpoint of providing the greatest good for the greatest number of people, instead of doing something which is good for my personal considerations. A
steward is someone who administers anything as the agent of another, which means that I am managing a team, or an organization for the good of the organization, instead of my personal gain, such as personal credibility, reputation, or earnings, etc. I am responsible for the decisions I make, in order to create a better future for the organization, I need to trust others so that they will cooperate with me to follow my commands. People should be equal under the system of rewards, which I, as the leader, have no privilege over others to enjoy priority when receiving rewards based on contributions.

When I was working in a trading company, the bonus which the sales representatives received was based on the amount of orders placed by the customers of each individual sales representative. As a result, there was one person who played accounting trick by providing huge discounts to his customers which boosted up the sales volume within a certain time frame, and he promised that the customers could return any unsold products for a full refund after an agreed period of time. In such case, the sales representative was able to get the bonus based on the sales, without subtracting the volume of refunds. However, the company had suffered from stocking up returned past-season goods from the customers which the company may need to sell them at a price which cannot cover the costs of production, and the additional cost of warehousing them.

If I am the sales person, I will consider the five points about stewardship before I offer my customers discounts from the aspect to increase my bonus. I will not do the same thing because I understand that the company trusts me so that it gives me the power to negotiate with the customers in order to bring in sales and profits to the company. Also, I am responsible for bringing profits to the company, instead of nourishing the sales figure which actually brings a loss to the company if the customers return the products they ordered. If I cannot bring profits to the company, I should not be eligible to gain the bonus. As a result, I would try my best to increase sales by presenting the strengths of our products over other competitors’ instead of offering unreasonable discounts and refund policies to the customers.

Key idea 2: Our bedrock values

At the end of this chapter, it provides several assumptions that we can think about what we will act as if the assumptions are true, which can be considered as the baselines when we make our decisions to take an action. First, I can assume that my widowed mother is the only shareholder who invests all of her savings in my company, so I will do anything to ensure the company’s profits as to ensure her earnings. Secondly, I can assume that my boss is my older sibling, so I will respect her/him and will trust her/his decision since the advice will always be frank. Third, if I consider my employees as my childhood friends, I will not do things which may harm them in
return for my own good. Fourth, when I treat the company’s primary customers as if they are my children, I will never take advantage of them. Last, when I assume that I am independently wealthy, I will take my job as a job I love, instead of a mean to earn money. Therefore, I will think purely for the benefit which complies with the company goal while personal gain will not be my main concern.

In general, I learn that the assumptions are actually telling us to put oneself in another person’s shoes. When I assume the different stakeholders are persons who are close to me, and I do care about their feelings or benefits, I will think in a way that our personal gain is not the first priority when I make decisions. I will find a way which will make them happy with what I am going to do, and will let them enjoy the greatest benefits. This is because if I treat the stakeholders as my family members or my good friends, I will not do anything for my own interests which may harm theirs.

In my culture, stewards often begin their jobs by using more formal authority and less people management skill. However, people management is the most important part of their job. Instead of authoritarian approach, I learn that they should manage based on communication, listening, and positive reinforcement. This is important because well-managed companies are competitive because their workforces are smarter, better trained, more motivated, and more committed, while the employees are more satisfied who can provide better customer services. This will lead to greater good for not only the company, but also the employees and all other stakeholders.

1.2 Learning from the Crucible of Crisis

Key idea 1: Simple truth to self-admiring bankers

Unfolding the subprime crisis, the writer suggests that the bankers who lost during the crisis should tattoo few lines onto the forehead to remind them about some simple truths of huge earnings which seem too marvelous. The lines include:

- Alchemy doesn’t work.
- Things that can’t go on forever usually don’t.
- Risks and returns are always correlated.
- Stupidity is contagious.
I learn that when something is too good to be true, it probably is. In reality, free market does not offer goods at no cost, which means that we always have to pay equal values in return of something we need. This indicates that when the earnings is much higher than the investments, it is probably the time for us to think twice about whether such wonderful thing could probably happen or not, is there any possibilities for the market to give people an incredible opportunity to earn a lot, which at the same time means that someone is losing a lot. The answer is probably “no”. The higher the returns, the higher the risk, and we should not let the easy money go to our heads. It is undoubtedly to be a joyful moment when earning money becomes so easy while one does not need to have any insights to invest in specific CDOs. However, as stated by the author, that stupidity is contagious, people can be brainwashed and become unable to see clearly about the facts.

The subprime mortgage crisis did not happen too far from now, and many people are still recovering, or not started to recover from it yet. Before Lehman Brothers filled its bankruptcy, people worshiped leveraging. Everyone believed that investing in housing-related assets would bring them a great fortune, while there was miraculously no risk at all. However, bubble economy would eventually burst since it was like a lie which would eventually be exposed one day. During the time when we invest in anything, we should always consider the correlation between risk and returns, as they are always positively related. There is no miracle, nor there is no such luck for most of the people to make big money easily. We would rather plant our feet on a solid ground, being prepared for any risks that we may face and be capable to carry over the crisis. When the economy recovers from the recession, we should never forget the lessons we learned.

Key idea 2: Moral duty in free market

It is the right for each individual to pursue his/her self-interest in an open economy, but moral foundation for capitalism is not very well developed which may bring havoc to the economy. People begin to think other stakeholders as their accessories to personal ambition, when it is normalized to use others as instruments to achieve success when necessary. We must be aware of the obligation of making the future of capitalism better, and we must raise our own ethical standards while at the same time influence others to do the same. Only under such circumstances, it will bring the society into harmony and peace.

I learn from this part that moral backsliding, similar to stupidity mentioned above, is contagious. It is also true for moral courage that if we build a good personal moral standard, we can be able to influence others. When everyone acts morally and ethically, there will be fewer crises caused
by the selfishness of some specific groups of people. Corporate social responsibility becomes a trend nowadays. A corporate should not only focus on its profits, but also the interests of its stakeholders. We should build our own ethical standards, so as the corporations. If all of us have the sense to act ethically, it will gather up the power and form an ethical society where everyone respects the other’s rights and benefits.

Since ethics is far beyond legal issues, it is more complicated for us to determine which is right or wrong. There are always ethical moments which we are standing in the middle of two sides. It may be hard for us to choose what to do, as sometimes it seems too cold-blooded for us to report someone whom we want to protect. For example, there was once when I accidentally saw a colleague returning money to the accountant, while it was the company’s money which the accountant lent to the colleague. I regretted not to report them to the manager, as I thought nothing could be changed as the money was borrowed and returned, and I did not wish to spoil the so called friendship among us. However, I kept thinking about the incident after that, I worried that what if the colleague borrows money again? And what if he does not pay back the money this time? Or what if it is discovered by the manager and innocent colleagues are implicated? As a result, I understand that I will never let the same thing happen again. If I am in any similar situations in the future, I will know the right way to stop it.

1.3 Rediscovering Farmer Values

Key idea 1: Pay-as-you-go approach to life

The writer talks about his mother-in-law had spent decades working with her husband on their family farm. They started by renting a small piece of land, which they expanded their ranch into a 1,000-acre farmland which was owned by them. They did this by keeping living expenses low, invest in land and equipment, and building cash reserves in good years so that they would not have problems in bad years. Their pay-as-you-go approach to life enabled them to save a fortune, yet more leverage might be able to generate more. However, they did not do that because they learned from the Depression-era, that it would be less risky to be realistic without flights of fancy.

I learned that in modern society, people always urge for rewards in short run. They do not care about much. It is tempting for us to see others earning a lot from leverage, while we seldom see the risks. It is important for us to understand how much effort we put into the work and the amount of outcomes are directly proportional. Luck is not something which can be relied on. Farmer values contradict the banker’s creed, which bankers embrace that they will not miss any opportunities to make money, while money is their only concern.
It is hard for us to withhold the temptation of profits gaining from leveraging, or other high-risk investments. In Hong Kong, real-estate is a market full of opportunities that everyone would want to invest some units which are still under construction and sell them at double price once when the project is complete. Since the real-estate market is overheated, short term investment can always be profitable. However, during the subprime crisis, many people could not leave the market safely because they have invested much more than they could afford, as a result many of them had run into bankruptcy which they could never be able to clear the debt. I learned from this chapter that we should always remember to weigh one’s abilities and act accordingly. No one can ensure a gain in investments, especially the high-risk ones. Although the pay-as-you-go approach may sound too conservative and we may lose some opportunities in life, it is the most solid way to ensure that we deserve to gain from how much we have worked.

Key idea 2: Real wealth creation and spawn lasting prosperity

The author describes the current situation of the U.S. economy, which the debt has increased more in the years between 2001 and 2008 than in the previous 39 years. American families spend most of the money on paying old debts than buying food. There is no miracle that the debt can be paid off suddenly, the economy cannot recover in short period of time, and deleveraging always hurt. However, it does not mean that no good can come of this. The situation can remind us to appreciate for the timeless virtues that engender real wealth creation and spawn lasting prosperity. The author describes it as “farmer values wax and banker values wane”, which implies that things will eventually get better.

I learned to find values from the bad times. Hard times does not always mean hopeless, crisis can always be turned into chances. It is usually a time for us to see things clearly, and be more thoughtful on our investment or our lives. We can find the values of each thing we plan to do, and we should always learn to bind around with silk before it rains. The future is unforeseeable, but we can always be prepared to face certain hardships.

When everybody was crazy about speculating in stocks or real estates, my parents always persist in not borrowing money to invest in stocks or buy properties. This is because it is similar to gamble with money borrowed from others. When you win, you gain a lot, but when you lose, you build up a debt that you cannot be able to pay off. I believe that they live with the farmer values mentioned above, which is also called the pay-as-you-go approach in life. They only spend what they have in hand, which they do not wish to spend over the budget, as to avoid
unpredictable circumstances. Learning from the current economic situations, this may be the best way to spawn lasting prosperity. The better we are prepared for the bad days, the sooner we can recover from it.

1.4 Renouncing Capitalism’s Dangerous Conceits

Key idea 1: The most toxic assumptions

There is a matrix of beliefs about what business is for, and how it creates value. The most toxic assumptions based on such beliefs include:

- The purpose of a business is to make money, to create immediate effects of its actions
- Executives’ contributions are evaluated and compensated on the basis of short-term earnings brought to the company
- A business’ social credentials is established through “doing good”, only when there’s an upside.
- Customers does not care about other values than the value for money
- A firm’s customers are the ones who pay, and they do not care about customers’ benefits.
- It is proper to use market power to drive competitors out, and it is also acceptable to create “brand” value by advertising instead of a socially constructed portrait of its real values.

I learned that social responsibility of a business is neglected for a long time. Companies and customers only care about what they can gain from the other side. They are not responsible for matters which do not relate to money making, and values are measured based on money. This is a sad truth that we should change, we should put oneself in else’s shoes to avoid harming others for our own good. Values are not limited to figures, there are some values which are not measurable, but can be felt. Businesses and individuals can create values based on what they do, which can benefit others in many ways. In other words, we can create a win-win situation from many aspects.

I will apply the knowledge by always asking myself “does this action create a value?” before I make a decision on doing something. I know that making money is probably the first priority for most businesses. No one would be interested in doing a business which does not generate a profit. However, we should have a bottom-line that we should not go against. For example, some travel agency would bring tourists to shops which they can get a large amount of commission from sales, usually over fifty-percent of the sale price. This means that the customers are paying for
goods value much lower than they expect, and so do the quality. This may be unfamiliar to Americans as we can always return the goods if we are not satisfied with it. For the businesses in Hong Kong, most sales are final, that no returns would be allowed. Even though if the policy allows returns or exchanges, it is sometimes unrealistic for tourists to come again from thousands miles away, complain with the sales assistants, and argue for a satisfactory solution for a defective good. As a result, the travel agencies are free to cooperate with the shops, and I would say that they rob the tourists in a way which is considered to be legal. Although the companies do not break the law, they are dishonest when doing business, and put aside the customers’ benefits which such business practice should not be encouraged. In this case, the value that I should create will be customer satisfaction while profit is considered next.

Key idea 2: Google Ideas

Google formed a new department of social innovation two years ago called Google Ideas. It aims to tackle some of society’s most pressing problems with the help of the company’s innovation capabilities. Google Ideas has several principles, which include:

- To make the planet a “better” place for business, and to make businesses “better” serves the interests of human being.
- Live with a company’s social legitimacy.
- Companies are expected to be socially accountable and socially entrepreneurial.
- Businesses need to be energetic and uniquely equipped to help mobilize the relevant parties of systemic problems.
- A company needs to buttress its social balance sheet, “don’t be evil” is not enough.

I learned that there are many companies which have statements similar to Google Ideas, while some are just PR ploy, and some are really concerned about a company’s social responsibility. A successful company should be able to find a balance among the needs of the stakeholders of the company and the society. In Dan Keeler’s article “Spread the Love and Make It Pay”, he shares that “A company is socially responsible if it takes seriously its obligations to all of its stakeholders. It is not about whether a company sponsors local events or environmental programs, or has a foundation that gives money to charitable causes. It is about developing a reputation of integrity so there is trust with employees, investors, customers, suppliers, and their communities” (Keeler, 2002). In addition to money contribution, a company should mobilize their people to contribute in community services, in order to show how much they care about the community.
In the future, I will apply this to my workplace. It is always influential for a company to lead its employee to work out some community service projects. Employees can be encouraged and motivated to take part in it by knowing the company supports those activities. In addition, being socially responsible can also help the company to build a positive image to show it cares about its community. As a result, it increases the cohesion among the company, its staff, and the society, everyone will have the mind to “be good” to others, by stretching a helping hand to anyone in need.

Reference

1.5 Reclaiming the Noble

Key idea 1: Transform great talent into accomplishment

The writer suggests an experiment pulling together a company’s latest report, its mission statement, or the transcript of a recent CEO speech. Scan for a list of repeated words and do an analysis to see which terms appear most frequently. He comments that most of the words do not speak to people’s heart, passionate commitment to timeless human values, such as truth, justice, charity, and courage seldom appear. It is doubted that a noble purpose is always absent in managerial discourse.

I learned that although companies nowadays are becoming more aware of social responsibility, or to be an ethical business, most of them are just armchair strategist that they still have not figure out a way to be ethical and responsible to the society. Since they have already done the first step, which they know the terms, they understand the meanings and know what should do, they should move forward to the second step to carry out those words they stated in their mission statements or in any reports.

In most of the Asian companies, they do not have a practice of making paperwork documenting a company’s mission, values, and goals. However, especially in Chinese culture, we have learned ethics and responsibilities from ancient literatures. Every one of us knows one must cultivate his/her moral character before being able to regulate the family and rule the state. It is similar to the idea of transforming great talent into exceptional accomplishment. We must do well, in order to influence people surrounding us, and so that we can spread out to the world with the ideas about doing the right thing to the society. If I work in a company with mission statement clearly stated, I will always ask myself if I am doing the right thing to meet with the company’s goal, and make sure that I do not go against it.
Key idea 2: Soul of business

The soul of business has to embrace the good, the just, and the beautiful, which are lack in the language of business. Hamel believes that long-lasting success stems from an allegiance to the sublime and the majestic.

I learn that all of the chapters in this section are talking about what values matter to persons and corporates. It gives an idea that modern businesses are no longer the same as the older business formats, which profit making is no long the sole and ultimate goal of running a business. We have learned that a person should ask himself or herself how to “be good” and contribute to the society, and so do a business. A business is responsible to pay back to the community, and to use its corporate power to influence people in the society to become a better person, a better business, and a better world. The soul of business is to create a better future for human being by acting ethically and become a moral model to people.

In order to give soul to a business, I will begin with asking “does this create a value both to the company and to other stakeholders?” We can simply think about if there is anyone who becomes better off with a certain business decision, which is not related to money but something related to morals. If the answer is positive, a business is creating a soul for itself. It is understandable that a business is not charity that it cannot always give out money which may harm the shareholders’ earnings, yet it is still possible for business to contribute to the society. For example, a business can help to eliminate discrimination by offering equal opportunities to all people; it can encourage its employees to do volunteer works by donating a certain amount of money in proportion to the hours the employees volunteer. There are many ways to contribute to the society; all we need to do is to think about how to create a better value of what we are going to do. By creating a value to a business, we also transform ourselves from a manager into a leader.

Chapter 1 When Leaders Are at Their Best

Key idea 1: Fearless

Barby Siegel, the CEO of Zeno Group, always wears a black bracelet borrowed from her teenage daughter. On the bracelet, it carries the word “FEARLESS”, which keeps reminding Siegel not to fear about anything. She believes that people need to stand on their own feet and not be afraid of what is going to happen. Siegel is very transparent about her values and vision for the organization, that she promotes hard work and continued success while also encouraging work-life balance and individualism within the Zeno corporate culture. The key idea is about “all for one and one for all” where people should not be afraid of making decisions or taking challenges to make change to the organization.

I learned from this story that when we want people around us to work for us, the first thing is to understand what we want to achieve, and then think about what we can do for them. We should not hesitate to think about changes, we should not let the unpredictable future stop our innovations. Changes begin from fearless, and people become more creative when they do not worry about what if their ideas do not work, and eventually they can make a difference by working together with others who share the same value.
To be “fearless” is what I need to learn and get used to. I am always afraid of making changes, because I do not want to see something happen not as what I expect. I am not sure if I can handle problems and am trying to avoid facing problems. Things can range from trying out a new restaurant, to making an important decision at work. I will apply this to any aspects of my life, that before turning my head away from problems or challenges, I should try to face it, think about what is the next step, and I can think about the possibilities of what will happen. The most important part is that I should not afraid to take action, which may bring a change to the current situation.

Key idea 2: Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

In order to bring a difference to an organization, Kouzes and Posner introduce The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. They are:

- Model the Way
- Inspire a Shared Vision
- Challenge the Process
- Enable Others to Act
- Encourage the Heart

I learned that these steps are the essentials to make a difference to an organization, or to a person. Leadership does not only happen within a company, but it can also happen in daily life. The ultimate goal of leadership is to clarify values and vision, bring a change, influence people around us to change their attitude on some values, and eventually reaching the heart, which we need to change in a positive way.

I will apply this to my life by carrying out these practices step by step. The first question is to ask what are the values of doing certain thing, follow by defining a shared vision with people who work with me. Knowing the true value a task can bring to people is very important that it will bring a change to both the people and the organization.

Key idea 3: Leadership is a Relationship

Leaders mobilize others to want to struggle for shared aspirations, which means that leadership is a relationship. It is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to
follow. It is the quality of this relationship that matters most when engaged in getting extraordinary things done.

I learned that leadership is to gather the power of people to make ordinary things extraordinary. And credibility is the foundation of leadership. As The Kouzes-Posner First Law of Leadership states that “if you don’t believe in the messenger, you won’t believe the message”. This means that we have to trust ourselves, and so that other people will trust us. As relationship is based on trust, and so do leadership. With trusts, followers will agree with leaders and cooperate to get a task done in the way they wish.

I will apply this knowledge to build creditable relationship with everyone. I want people to trust me and the decisions I make. Therefore, I will also learn to trust others, by figuring out the reason why people make a certain decision. We cannot live alone without interacting with others. Only with their help, we can make things better. As a result, building trust is the first step to build a solid relationship with people.

Chapter 2 Clarify Values

Key idea 1: Find Your Voice

Finding your own voice means to explore your inner self. We have to discover what we care about, what defines us, and what makes us who we are. Values shape our personal “bottom line”, which serves as guides to action. With values, we know how to set priorities for things and what decisions we need to make. Also, say things in our own words is also a way to find our voice, and we must also give voice to those words.

I learned that different people have different understandings about the same thing. We need to clarify the differences and our expectations so that people can follow what we talk. Moreover, after defining a value, we have to carry it out, so that we give voice to those words we say. This can be understood as building credibility. We need to prove that our values and beliefs really matter that they are.

Finding my voice is not an easy task. I have to have a vision to carry out something, and I need to try things out to see whether it works or not. By knowing what things we need to do and what is going to happen if we do certain things, we can earn credibility on what we say, hence having our voice found. I have another understanding about finding our voice, which means we should not be afraid to talk. Usually when we have an idea in our mind, we may not be able to bring it
up and share it with others because we are shy to talk and do not wish to receive disagreements. We have to find the courage to express ourselves so that people would know what we are thinking and hence respond to our words. A leader should not hide their thoughts from others since people want to follow the words said by a leader they trust.

Key idea 2: Affirm Shared Values

Leadership is not simply about own values. It is also about the values shared by a group of people. Personal values drive one’s own commitment to the organization, but the values are not shared. With shared values, people are more engaged in a place where they believe they can stay true to their beliefs. Sometimes common values may go against diversity, which it suppress the advantage of diversity. So the idea is to share some values among people, by not neglecting differentiation and diversity. People need to have some common core of understanding, which can help them to uncover, reinforce, and hold one another accountable to what “we” value.

I learned that each person are unique, none of them have the exact same values. The key point it to find out what are shared in common, and what are not, in order to find a balance between different values, and create a new “common” value to an organization. People need to learn to live with others, and they are not working alone. Affirming shared values can help them better contribute to an organization by knowing the thoughts of other colleagues.

I will apply this by listening more to people who work with me. I need to know what they appreciate about my way of working, and what they do not like. Their expectations on me and the organization are what I need to address, too. This can help us to create a shared, or it may become a common value among us, which the goal is to create the best possibilities to the organization. I will have my own bottom lines which cannot go against, but if others’ values are better than mine, I will accept it as our shared value.

Key idea 3:

Shared values foster strong feelings of personal effectiveness; promote high levels of company loyalty; facilitate consensus about key organizational goals and stakeholders; encourage ethical behavior; promote strong norms about working hard and caring; reduce levels of job stress and tension; foster pride in the company; facilitate understanding about job expectations; and foster teamwork and esprit de corps.
I learned that shared values are the essential to encourage morals and ethics, to help people finding satisfactions from work. With such values, it gives people reasons to care about themselves, others, and the company. And by knowing the differences among people, we learn to understand and accept the differences, thus unity can be forged.

From the companies I worked for, we had no idea about what are the company’s missions, vision, and values. We did not know what we can contribute to the company, in addition to the long hours of work to get tasked done. I could not find the value for me to exist in the company since I believed that anyone else can do my job well, and they do not need me as unique personnel who cannot be replaced by others. As a result, I did not care about the company; there was no organizational goal for me to achieve, and no one cares about me as I do not care about others. In short-run, it did not seem to be a problem that each colleague only needs to finish their assigned task in order to bring a profit to the company. However, in long-run, it was so meaningless to work in a company like this. I could not see what change I could bring to the company or what could the company change me. There would never have an extraordinary thing happen within the organization as no one would ever expect one to exist. I hope that I can bring the idea of leadership to my home country so that leaders there can know the difference between management and leadership. I want to apply such idea in workplace so that people would find it meaningful to work in an organization which appreciates their contributions.

Chapter 3  Set the Example

Key idea 1:  Live the Shared Values

Live the shared values can be simplified to “do what you say you will do or DWYSYWD for short”. When we are doing what we say, we are at the same time teaching others to model the values. By doing so, we need to spend time and attention wisely, watch the language we use, ask purposeful questions daily, and seek for valuable feedback.

I learned that the previous chapters are giving the general outline of what leadership should look like, and how to plan, while this chapter is focused on how we should do. After having shared values, we have to seek for how to carry them out, in order to make things meaningful.

I will apply this knowledge by always remember the rules. When I know what I need to do, I will plan it well, and spend my time wisely. When I communicate with others, I will choose carefully what wordings I should use in order to let others know that I am aware of their contributions, and
I value their opinions. When I ask a question, I will ask them purposefully, by not wasting time on meaningless things, and seek for contributive feedback which can improve my work. I would not always expect for positive feedback, as I know I am not perfect. There is always space for me to improve, as long as people are willing to give me suggestions. If I can follow these rules, I can set myself as a model to others whom they can learn from. The key concept is that we should avoid individualism, everyone can find something special to learn from others. The shared values should be something we can positively contribute to the organization, and at the same time achieve personal growth and improvements.

Key idea 2: Tell Stories

Stories are a powerful tool for teaching people about what’s important and what’s not, what works and what doesn’t, what is and what could be. Through stories, leaders pass on lessons about shared values and get others to work together. Telling stories forces you to pay close attention to what your constituents are doing. Peers generally make better role models for what to do at work than famous people or ones several levels up in the hierarchy.

I learned that story telling is always one of the best ways to impress others and lead to the outcomes we expect easily. Listening to stories from people we know can make us feel more familiar with what has happened. This is because we are more empathetic about what happens around us. It is more effective than to talk about some stories we heard from others, or from the news, as they are not as closely related to our daily lives as the story teller does.

I will apply this by using a story to explain what I want to tell others. Throughout the exchange of ideas after telling a story, people can understand my words more easily, and sometimes I may be able to gain from their feedbacks. I found out that it is hard for one to remember a topic which is not interesting, but if we can introduce the ideas by telling a story, it will be easier for us to understand, and we can also remember it for a longer period of time. When we forget what the teacher told us in the previous class, it is possible that we can remember the details of a story told by the same person weeks ago. This is because it is more impressive with a story, and is easier to remember. Moreover, every time when we think about the story told by others, we may be able to find out some new inspirations from it. This is something that plain words cannot teach.
Chapter 7 Experiment and Take Risks

Key idea 1: Prepare, not repair

In the beginning of the chapter, there is a story about Ward Clapham, the commander of the Richmond, BC, detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). It was a critical time for the RCMP to keep their policing contract with the city as the crime rate and the youth crime way are both high. Clap was in charge of moving the detachment in a new direction and breaking old mindsets. He helped to reduce false alarms by 80 percent, overall crime by 30 percent, and youth crime was reduced by 50 percent, letting the police force to be able to reinvest over $310,000 in manpower every year back into preventing crime, instead of coping with crimes.

I learned from Clapham that we should not let the status quo holding our step back. Instead, we need to “move to a model of prepare, not repair.” Clapham describes that the police forces were putting Band-Aids on problems and did not get at the roots of the problems. He has create the sense of urgency that the police force needed a change, which they should not always go to deal with crimes, but they should think about how to reduce the crime rate by preventing crimes to happen. I like his idea of giving out Positive Tickets to kids who are caught doing things right, in order to replace the traditional negative police ticket. People get encouraged to receive those tickets, and this may increase the chance for them to do good things.

Clapham’s way of thinking can be applied to any situation that we should not wait until things happen to think about how to solve the problems. We should prepare in advance, and think of what can prevent unfavorable things to happen. It is very true that we are always bounded by many sets of rules or traditions that we do not want to challenge people’s usual way of doing things. We hesitate to make changes, not even to think about doing something different. Since punishment is not always the best way to correct things, I will apply Clapham’s idea which I will try to think about what I can do to help people correcting their mistakes, in a way that will make them willing to correct it, and without hard feelings. Rewards should be always more welcome than punishments when people do something wrong and need to make it right.

Key idea 2: No involvement, no ownership

Clapham reversed the situation that his officers report their problems and the commander make his decisions and give them order to how to do. He turned the situation into pushing the problems back to his officers, asking them to give suggestions on how to improve the situations they describe and by asking them what they would do differently.
I learned that people cannot learn if they do not think about the problem. Perhaps things can be done sooner if I simply give them orders or instructions on what they should do. However, they could never learn since they do not have the chance involve in it. As the old saying tells us that “no involvement, no ownership”, if I do not get people involved into a task, they will never learn from the task.

I will apply this to my current job as a tutor. It is easy for me to give out solutions on how to solve the problems. And it will cost me much less time to give students the answers instead of guiding them to think about how to solve the problem step by step. My goal is not just helping them to finish their assignment and turn it in for a grade, but I should also help them to learn how to solve the problem on their own, by knowing certain concepts of the course materials so that they can apply the idea to other similar problems. If I do not get the students involved in their assignment, they can never learn. It will become meaningless for me to be a tutor, since a solution guide can help them better than me.

Key idea 3: Learn

This part of the chapter talks about people never get it right the first time, especially when people are trying to do things which were never done before. To achieve the extraordinary, we have to be willing to test unproven strategies, and break out of the norms. The most significant difference between an exemplary leader and an individual risk-taker is that leaders can motivate others to join them on testing bold ideas and taking calculated risks, which an individual risk-taker does not have such characteristic. Also, leaders turn experiments into learning opportunities, either they succeed in trying the new things, or they learn from the failure. They gain some experience in both ways which can help them to improve and go further in the future.

From this chapter, I learned that we should never let the norms to limit us. This is similar to Henry Fonda’s role in the movie “12 Angry Men”, that he was at first the only one who voted “not guilty” to the Mexican boy from a New York city slum, who is on trial for allegedly stabbing his father to death. Based on prejudice and the fear to be different from others, the remaining eleven jurors voted him to be guilty. Henry Fonda maintains that the boy deserves a fair deliberation, and questions the accuracy and reliability of the witnesses to the murder, and finally reverses all votes into unanimous “not guilty”.

There were times when I held a different opinion with my colleagues, but I did not express my thoughts because I thought that I could not make any changes when the majority had already agreed on something. I will apply what I have learned here to my future life, both personally and professionally, that I should always have a stand on my own thoughts and should not hesitate to raise questions if I believe that I am correct on certain points. This is because what the majority believe is not always true, and we need discussions or sometimes outsource references to prove whether it is correct or not. We should not just let things be, saying that when most people believe that it is true must be true. If I can raise my voice, I may be able to become the one to make a change to the status quo in a positive way.

Chapter 8 Foster Collaboration

Key idea 1: Invest in trust

According to Kouzes and Posner, “trust is a strong, significant predictor of employee satisfaction, the quality of communication, honest sharing of information, acceptance of change, acceptance of the leader’s influence, and team and organizational performance”. It is also stated that people who trust others are more likely to be happy and psychologically adjusted than are those who view the world with suspicion and distrust. In general, people are more happy and positive when they trust others.

I learned that any kind of relationship should be based on trust. If you cannot trust others, it will be hard for others to trust you. As trust is one of my personal core values, I believe that trust is the most important thing in relationships among people. This is because if there is no trust, nothing can establish. On the other hand, I was taught to be considerate, which is very similar to one of the quick ethical tests mentioned in Business Ethics: A Stakeholder & Issues Management Approach by Joseph W. Weiss, “The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” (Weiss, 2001). Its idea is to put oneself into a condition to consider what the other side will feel before we make a decision or perform an act. This can be expressed as if we want others to trust us, we have to trust others first.

I will keep applying this to my daily life that I always choose to trust people with what they tell me. This is because I think they have no reason to lie to me. A relationship built on trust can be more long-lasting than always criticizing and suspecting others’ intention on making certain decisions. I believe that no relationship can be built on doubts, so I will keep on choosing to trust people.
Key idea 2: Structure projects to promote joint effort

People would prefer to work together if the payoffs for interdependent efforts are greater than independent work. Since people growing up in Westernized countries that emphasize individualistic or competitive achievement have the perception that they will do better if the reward is solely based on individual accomplishments. Kouzes and Posner point out that it is wrong to have such belief. The world prefers to do more with less, so do strategies that promote collaboration is preferred over competitive strategies.

I learned similar idea from Chinese culture, that we always promote group work. There is an idiom which says “unity of will is an impregnable stronghold” can demonstrate the idea. Sometimes it is hard for a person to work alone, but it will become very easy if few persons collaborate and work together. Also, there’s another idiom which says “three ignorant cobblers add up to a genius” which gives the same idea that if each people can express their ideas, they may add up to become a great idea.

Usually, when I cannot come up with any ideas, I would like to listen to others’ opinions. This is because they can either give me an idea on what I should do, or lead me to a new thought which I would never think in such direction if I did not hear from them. It is common that someone’s unintentional thought may be the other one’s inspiration, and that is the reason why we should always be open-minded to listen to others. I will apply this to team projects both in school and at work. I appreciate everyone to contribute to the projects instead of my own personal success. I believe that without the help from others, many things cannot be done smoothly and successfully.
HBR Articles Critiques

Innovation’s Holy Grail

This article introduces three kinds of Gandhian Innovations, which can be interpreted as the Indian way of how companies and organizations innovate. They key idea is that there is a shift from premium pricing and abundance to affordability and sustainability in companies. It is important for the companies’ products to reach more people at a lower price than they used to be. Companies should offer more products or services with fewer resources, and the “Gandhian innovation” is:

- Disrupting business models
- Modifying organizational capabilities
- Creating or sourcing new capabilities

And the steps to get innovation right break into five parts, we have to develop a deep commitment to serving the unserved, have a clear vision, set ambitious goals to foster an organizational spirit, understand that there are always constrains and learn to cope with that, and lastly, we should focus on people instead of just shareholders’ benefits.

I learned that people is the most important focus for companies nowadays. If a company wants to maximize its profits, it needs to think about people, such as how can it better serve its customers, or how to increase the customer source, etc. People may get lost if they keep focusing on the profits and shareholder benefits. However, the appropriate way to generate the biggest profit should begin from focusing on people. It is similar to Kouzes and Posner’s idea that the final step of leadership challenge is to encourage the heart. This is true in any companies or organizations that people’s contributions can be maximized only when they are motivated to do so. On the other hand, this article reminds me about a Japanese skincare brand’s slogan: “less is more”. Sometimes more does not mean to be better, where less may be more effective than more. It can also be explained with the law of diminishing returns, that more input may lead to a diminishing returns, which means the best way is to generate the greatest benefits with less resources.

I will apply this to my study and my work. Both the teachers and companies are looking for quality instead of quantity. Quality can always lead to people’s satisfaction over a piece of work. Yet quantity may be used as a minimum requirement that certain amount of output should be met. For example, our homework assignment has a minimum requirement of pages to be done in order to set a common standard to avoid students who simply write few sentences for the assignment. But the content of the assignment is what the teacher looking for. This can also be applied to work, that even if I am working in a factory, I will not focus only on the quantity of
goods I can produce. If a large amount of defective products are manufactured, it will not help to increase the company’s profit at all. Instead, a quality product can always gain customer’s attention and eventually generate more profits for the company.

4 Mistakes Leaders Keep Making

The four mistakes leaders keep making include:

- Failing to set proper expectations – focus on wrong direction which can never help to correct the problems an organization has. Goals and deadlines are unclear which make people hard to follow.
- Excusing subordinates from the pursuit of overall goals – it is the disadvantage of decentralization that people do not care about the companywide goal. Each individual focus on their personal achievements only.
- Colluding with staff experts and consultants – experts are confident about their expertise, while they are not sure about the effectiveness of the solutions they provide to the company, and it also limits their commitment.
- Waiting while associates prepare, prepare, prepare – people keep waiting for others to begin a change, and endless preparation give an illusion of progress but nothing is actually done.

I learn that we should learn from these common mistakes and avoid making the same mistakes in the future. It is true that many experts are too confident about themselves, that sometimes they cannot see what a company needs and give whatever they think is best from them, not best to the company. Moreover, there are always to-do lists in some company that those preparation tasks can never be finished and the goals can never be reached.

When I was working in a trading company, our target market was North America. However, a Netherlander designer was hired to renovate our showroom. He was very confident about his work and the result was a very European style showroom which did not match with the themes of our products at all. The sales of that season was poor, it dropped for at least 20 percent, yet the designer did not realize that it was his problem, instead he blamed the quality of the products which was not the main reason of the decreasing sales. On the other hand, the director of this company loves to hold meetings, which he keeps listing out what we should do, and repeating the steps again and again. He focuses too much on the process and forgets to talk about the goal of doing such tasks. Eventually, most of us, including himself, will forget about what he really want us to do, as all the preparations have distracted our attentions and no one can ever remember the goal. I will apply the concepts of this article to similar situations at work, that I should avoid making the same mistake as listed in the article.
Leadership Assessment Case Critiques

Overpromoted and Over His Head
Roche, Eileen, Benton, Debra and Chizen, Bruce

Source:
Harvard Business Review; Jan2010, Vol. 88 Issue 1, p143-147, 5p

Document Type:
Case Study

Abstract:
The HBR fictional case study and the views of two experts are presented. An executive's ability to manage the company after the death the chief executive officer is being questioned. Voyage Capital venture partner Bruce Chizen says that the executive should gain support from colleagues by asking for advice. Benton Management Resources' executive coach Debra Benton, author of the book "CEO Material: How to Be a Leader in Any Organization," comments on the promotion. INSET: READERS' INSIGHTS.

Overpromoted and Over His Head.

Dan Sestak has had an impressive career at packaged-foods giant NutriSelect. But with his latest promotion, has he bitten off more than he can chew?

HBR's fictional cases present dilemmas that real leaders face and offer solutions from experts. Dan Sestak scanned the article on page two of the business section again, his headache intensifying. "Three months after NutriSelect CEO Michael Botolph died of a heart attack, the skills of his successor are being questioned," it read. "Insiders report that new CEO Daniel Sestak, aged 43, lacks the experience and the vision to effectively take the helm." The story went on to reveal worrisome details about the company's financial situation, which was shakier than it had appeared.

Clearly, someone at NutriSelect had chosen to leak inside information to the media rather than deal with Dan directly, and he hated that. It was the coward's way, and it would only hurt the company in the long run. But the worst part was that he couldn't deny there was some truth to the report. He had taken on much more than he had bargained for, and at this moment he wasn't entirely confident that he was up to the challenge. That was a new and unsettling feeling for him.

Dan had sailed through an Ivy League education and graduated at the top of his class in business school. Quickly labeled a rising star at food giant NutriSelect--which made breakfast cereals, frozen desserts, and nearly every type of food a person could eat in between--he had entered the
executive-training program, rotating through positions in operations, marketing, and strategy. Each time he was handed bigger challenges and more responsibility. He'd proven to be resourceful and creative, and he'd been praised for his fresh perspective. Maybe packaged goods weren't as sexy as Silicon Valley, where many of his B-school friends had headed, but Dan had foreseen exciting changes in the food industry. He was convinced that with consumers becoming more health-conscious, organic farming was where the future of the industry lay. NutriSelect had been one of the first large companies to recognize the trend. Dan had been leading the organics division when, six months ago, the board approached him saying they'd like to groom him as Michael's successor.

According to the plan, Michael would stay on for an additional five years to mentor Dan and ensure a smooth transition. That would give Dan ample time to develop a strong understanding of the whole organization and to gain the confidence of the senior team. When Dan accepted the assignment, he'd heard grumblings about his age, and he was well aware that there were a few noses out of joint among those who'd been passed over. But he expected that with time, he'd win them over, just as he'd won over detractors in organics. Now, with Michael gone, time was a luxury he didn't have.

Simmering in the C-Suite

"Before we wrap things up, I need to address one last issue," Dan said to his senior executive team. They were gathered in the conference room for their weekly meeting and had just finished reviewing budget projections. "I'm assuming you've all seen the piece on NutriSelect, and on me in particular, in today's Journal." Dan looked around the table, wondering if the inside source was staring back at him. Cybil Meachem looked uncomfortable, but as the head of public relations, she had every reason to be. Sam Choi, the head of human resources, gave him a sympathetic smile. The CFO, Richard Wells, looked annoyed, Dan thought, but whether at the article or at him, he couldn't tell. He and Richard had a strained working relationship at best. Once Dan had been named CEO, he started poring through reports to get a better handle on the company's financial situation. He couldn't tell if Richard took his hands-on approach as a personal affront or was simply irate that he hadn't been tapped for the top job. Richard had reminded Dan more than once that he'd been overseeing the company's numbers for two decades--longer than

Dan had been out of B school.

Dan wasn't looking for a fight, but he wasn't about to be intimidated, either. The investments in the pension plan, for instance, weren't diversified, and as a result, they'd taken a serious beating in 2008. Every business had to deal with fallout from the market dive, but NutriSelect had been hit especially hard. Dan was confounded by the company's performance. With the strategy Michael had put in place and several good investments in technology and R&D, the company should have been doing much better than it was.

"There was confidential financial information in that story," Dan said. "Whoever the source was, he or she had access to our latest numbers."
Rena Singh, the COO, said sharply, "You're not accusing someone in this room, are you?" She was sitting next to Richard, Dan noticed. That was hardly a surprise. He thought of them as the old guard, and although neither had been overtly confrontational, each had hinted that Dan wasn't ready for his new role. He thought back to the disagreement they'd had about a contract Rena and Richard had orchestrated last year with a new supplier for the frozen dinners line. The deal saved the company several million dollars, but Dan worried that it sacrificed quality. Saving money now but losing customers down the line wasn't a trade-off Dan was willing to make, especially not when health risks were a real possibility: How would they respond if salmonella were discovered in the product line? Fear of a scandal like the E. coli spinach contamination in 2006, or last year's peanut recall, was the sort of thing that kept Dan up at night. When he broached the issue, they had been dismissive, arguing that recouping losses from the downturn had to be the company's top priority. Richard had even suggested that Dan was being overly idealistic. Rena added, "You signed up for more than organics when you stepped into this role." Dan pushed the recollection from his mind. "I'm not accusing anyone," he said. "None of us is happy with the negative press. But this isn't the work of some angry production employee. We need to look at our staffs carefully."

"I know you're feeling the heat," Rena shot back, "but do you honestly believe a witch hunt is the best way to approach this?"
Feeling the tension mount, Cybil jumped in. "Of course this is not the type of press coverage we're looking for," she said with a rueful smile, "but it's not the end of the world. I can draft a statement, maybe get you an interview with Food Processing or some local outlets. Since the spotlight is on you, we should try to turn it to our advantage."
Sam nodded. "Let's not get distracted. Shareholders understand that new leaders go through a period of transition. If we stay focused on what we need to--our core business--the results will speak for themselves."

If You Can't Stand the Heat

When the meeting wrapped up, Dan returned to his office. He had only a half hour before a full afternoon of back-to-back appointments, but he couldn't concentrate on his e-mail. He knew he hadn't handled himself well. The last thing he needed was to sow strife in his team or seem on the defensive. He already had more on his plate than he could handle: meeting quarterly budget numbers, setting strategic goals for the next five years, bolstering employee morale after the death of the CEO, and now dealing with bad press. Taking a steadying breath, he picked up the phone to call Hal Brown, his friend and mentor on the board. He hoped the directors weren't second-guessing their decision to hand him the reins several years earlier than planned.

After exchanging pleasantries with Dan, Hal cut to the chase. "Look, we've seen the article, and we know this isn't easy for you. But remember, Dan, you have supporters on the board. Take your time, keep meeting with your coach, keep doing the things that brought you here. You're a smart guy--you'll figure it out."

Hanging up the receiver, Dan felt reassured. He apparently didn't need to worry about a board revolt--at least not yet--but he still had his work cut out for him. First on his list was to shore up
his relationships with the senior executives. Without their buy-in, he knew, he'd have no chance to succeed.

As he made his way to his next meeting, he considered his options. There was an argument to be made for biding his time and trying to build rapport with his colleagues slowly. They had just experienced a major shake-up and a personal tragedy, after all. It was natural for people to need time to adjust--and grieve. On the other hand, Sam had warned him that the rank and file were feeling stressed. With new leadership at the top, employees were fearful that Michael Botolph's pledge of no layoffs might be reversed. Maybe Dan should try to focus the company's energy on something positive: NutriSelect's 75th anniversary was coming up next year. He could ask his marketing head, Allison Franklin, to come up with a new campaign to celebrate NutriSelect's history. They had worked well together before, and he admired her creativity. And Sam could take the lead in planning an internal celebration. It couldn't be extravagant, but recognizing the dedication of the firm's workforce, especially in tough economic times, might boost morale. That wouldn't help the situation with Rena and Richard, however. Should he take a more conciliatory approach, he wondered? If he admitted that he was in over his head and needed their guidance, would they be more apt to support him? Showing weakness would be a risk, though. He had been chosen as CEO because the board believed he could take NutriSelect to the next level. If he didn't start moving the company in a new direction, how long would he keep the board in his corner?

He thought again of the supplier contract--the one Richard and Rena had fully supported. He wanted NutriSelect to be known for healthful, affordable food and to set the industry standard for quality. And it couldn't reach those goals if costs were its sole priority. Maybe Dan had to prove that he was in control by taking a firm stand now.

Dan knew he had to choose fast. The longer he flailed, the harder it would be for him--and the company--to recover.

**Note:** Please answer the questions on page 4 in essay format, and submit pages 4 and 5 to your instructor.

**What’s going on?**

Dan Sestak, the new CEO of NutriSelect, took over the company five years earlier than he was planned to. Someone at NutriSelect leaked inside information to the media, which the information led the public to question Dan’s ability as the successor of the former CEO Michael Botolph. Dan wanted to find out who was the one to lead company since he knew that it would hurt the company in the long one, yet he could not deny the report was somehow true.
Sestak lost confidence at first, but he was reassured after talking to Hal Brown, his friend and mentor on the board, knowing that he has supporters on the board. All he needs to do is to keep doing the right things and figure out how to solve the problems. In order to boost up his colleagues’ morale, he was thinking to support Allison Franklin, the marketing head’s idea of celebrating the company’s 75th anniversary. On the other hand, Sestak was thinking whether or not should he agree with the COO and CFO’s idea on introducing new supplier for the frozen dinners line which may sacrifice quality. He had to make up his mind to choose to agree with the plan or to take a firm stand. The situation is that the longer time Sestak take to make a decision, the harder it would be for both himself and the company to recover.

What’s the best way for Dan to turn the situation around?

According to the case, Dan should turn the situation around by dealing with the following areas. First, he has to turn the public’s focus from Dan to the advantage of the company. Secondly, employees’ morale is important to the company at such critical time, which an internal celebration may be a good idea to appreciate their contributions. Moreover, if the idea of introducing a new supplier is going to harm company’s reputation on quality, it may harm the company’s profit in long-run. As a result, Dan should take a firm stand on not agreeing on the proposal. With these considerations, Dan may be able to turn the situation around by building a positive image of himself as a leader and give a positive contribution to the company.

Choose two leadership styles that you consider most appropriate and applicable in this context and apply the strengths of those 2 styles in resolving the issue at hand.

Dan demonstrates both transactional and people-oriented leadership styles. From his past experience of foreseeing the trend of healthy food and organic farming, he helped the company to become the first large companies to recognize the trend and responded to it. The strength of this style is that he knows what to do and how to do things, and has the ability to give out proper orders for others to follow.

When he was trying to resolve the issue at hand, he first focused on his relationship with each colleague in the room, trying to figure out who supported him and who were not on his side. He tried to find out how to please everyone by knowing each one’s expectations, such as if he should approve Rena and Richard’s suggestion on introducing new supplier, and the feeling of the shareholders, etc. A people-oriented leadership style can help leader to take care of every one’s feelings, so that it may motivate people to contribute to the company when they feel their opinion and efforts are important.
Leaders vs Managers

Leaders, similar to stewards, are persons who lead a group of people to achieve a common goal, such as to create a better future for an organization. It is not limited to sales and profits, but more about motivating people to devote certain kind of contributions to the organization in order to make the business “do well”. There are many leaders I admire, whom they all share some common characteristics which can be developed. Leadership is about what will be, about discover the new system, about develop human talent, horizon, effectiveness, and about doing right thing. The first job of a leader is to define reality, and to inspire people to get things done enthusiastically.

Leadership is much more to deal with how to motivate people about commitment and enjoy their work. It is to deal with consequences in the future, while management is to deal with what happens in present. On the other hand, the primary difference between leaders and managers is that leaders are concerned with doing the right thing, yet managers are concerned with doing things right (Bennis, 1989). Managers often begin their jobs by using more formal authority and less people management skill. However, people management is the most important part of their job. Instead of authoritarian approach, they should manage based on communication, listening, and positive reinforcement. This is important because well-managed companies are competitive because their workforces are smarter, better trained, more motivated, and more committed, while the employees are more satisfied who can provide better customer services. This will lead to greater sales revenues, profits, and stock market performance.
As a manager in a travel agency, I used to allocate works to each co-worker based on their qualifications or experience. I did not think much about motivating them to work together as a whole, and I seldom gather their opinions about our current work pattern for improvement. At that time, all I wanted to do was to finish all tasks on time, and correctly with no mistakes. I did not want to hear my phone ringing after work, since that would mean our tours were having problems outside, such as a tourist was missing, or a flight was cancelled. Each of us was responsible for an individual part of the tour, including the transportation, hospitality, catering, sightseeing, and ticketing, etc. The most common problem was time conflict which the tour could not arrive a specific point on time which delayed the following journey. If I knew how to motivate them to share their ideas on how to improve that, problems should be solved easily. I always tried to do things right, but I did not realize doing the right things can make things right more easily.

References
The Service Project Presentation

One Brick provides support to local non-profit and community organizations by creating a unique, social and flexible volunteer environment for those interested in making a concrete difference in the community. We enable people to get involved, have an impact and have fun, without the requirements of individual long-term commitments. The day was a "Prep Day" organized by Operation Gratitude, where works include sorting donated items, folding shirts, screening letters, and otherwise preparing the products and the Assembly Line.

Operation Gratitude seeks to lift morale and put smiles on faces by sending care packages addressed to individual Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines deployed in harm's way. Tens of thousands of American Service Members are deployed in hostile and remote regions of the world, including the Middle East, Afghanistan, and on ships throughout international waters. The physical conditions they must endure are difficult and they may be separated from loved ones for long periods of time. Through Collection Drives, Letter Writing Campaigns and Donations of funds for shipping expenses, Operation Gratitude provides civilians anywhere in America a way to express their respect and appreciation to the men and women of the U.S. Military in an active, hands-on manner.
Operation Gratitude

_phase 1_

- Waltman Certification of the National Food Bank
- Hayes Foundation and Westside Foundation
- Middle Tennessee State University and the City of Murfreesboro
- Students from both schools and the City of Murfreesboro
- Library Park: Water gardens, green space

_phase 2_

- Activities for youth, seniors, and veterans
- Homeless veterans: Shelter and community events

_results_

- 250 volunteers from 15 schools
- 500 community members
- 300 meals
- 1000 books

Core

Drive

Foundation

- Community service fosters a sense of pride within our nation.
- Assisting a group who needs our help and support (Veterans).
- As MBA students, create organizations that are giving and emphatic.
- In good and bad times, a complete stranger is capable of giving hope to anyone.

Foundation
Drive

One Brick
- Based out of San Francisco, CA
- Strives to bring like-minded individuals together to help out their communities
- Creates bonds of friendship through service

Operation Gratitude
- Creates care packages for active military troops
  - also assists military families and veterans
- Provides resources for variety of challenges that men and women of the uniform must confront

Veterans: Foundation of Our Nation’s Security
- Trained physically and mentally for warfare
- Endure tours for variable lengths of time
  - Often Away from their friends and families
- Likely to suffer from PTSD and other mental issues
  - Affected by bodily injury or turn of events
Phase 1

Phase 2
Results

We Support Our Troop

Thank You
“Send a Package to the Troops”
APA Paper 1: Li Ka Shing

Abstract

Li Ka Shing is the chairman of Hutchison Whampoa Limited and Cheung Kong Holdings, a philanthropist and the founder of Li Ka Shing Foundation (LKSF). He believes that knowledge can change fate, and study will create the future. According to Li’s philosophy, he is not rich by possess a huge fortune, but he is rich by knowing the fact that true wealth means giving and helping people in need, while expecting nothing in return. Li has demonstrated transformational leadership style, which creates a connection among people and raises their level of motivation and morality. A good leader is not someone who can create a fortune; it is someone who is able to make a change to the society like Li does, by transforming people’s definition of values. The ultimate purpose of funding educational projects is to spread the idea of helping others to learn, and learn to pay it forward so that more people can be benefited.
Li Ka Shing

Sir Ka-Shing Li, GBM, KBE, JP, is the most powerful man in Asia and the one of the top ten richest persons in the world as of 2012. Apart from the titles such as the chairman of Hutchison Whampoa Limited and Cheung Kong Holdings, he is also a philanthropist and the founder of Li Ka Shing Foundation (LKSF). Li believes that knowledge can change fate, and study will create the future. According to his philosophy, he is not rich by possess a huge fortune, but he is rich by knowing the fact that true wealth means giving and helping people in need, while expecting nothing in return. Li pledged to donate one-third of his assets and considers the Li Ka Shing Foundation as his third son, which devotes to create a culture of giving. Since Li was struggling for quality education and healthcare services in his early life, these became two critical focuses of the Foundation. Knowledge does not guarantee a life of riches, but it does open up more opportunities which are the best to expect. Similar to this, charity does not guarantee a fruitful outcome, but it does give people opportunity to change the future, and this is the main idea to nurture a culture of giving. Li has demonstrated transformational leadership style, which creates a connection among people and raises their level of motivation and morality. A good leader is not someone who can create a fortune; it is someone who is able to make a change to the society like Li does, by transforming people’s definition of values.

The Li Ka Shing Foundation is an organization which carries out Li Ka Shing’s belief on making a change to the world by improving education provided to the youths. It is a projection of Li’s anticipation on how he and the Foundation are working to create an environment where people can overcome the educational barriers preventing them from achieving their potentials, and thus use their knowledge to innovate a different future. According to LKSF (2012), it seeks
out projects and causes deserving assistance, with the objectives to nurture a culture of giving, and support education reform initiatives that encourage long-term thinking, empowerment, creativity, open-mindedness, and constructive engagement (About LKSF section, para. 4), based on Li’s “belief in the inherent value of each human life, regardless of race, class, or circumstance” (About Li Ka-shing, para 3), as a result to create a cycle of charity and a better world for all. LKSF has funded in building Shantou University in mainland China, and sponsoring scholarships and educational programs in different academic institutes. It has also invested in the project of STAND – Satellite Transmission Advance Network for Distance Learning, which helps to form a complete set of learning resources for students who do not enjoy the privileges to go to school. Li Ka Shing sees that education is a preparation of life, and he believes that it is “every man’s obligation to make possible each as well as the other’s meaningful participation in society” (LKSF, 2012), and that is the ultimate purpose of his investment in education, by spreading the idea of helping others to learn, and learn to pay it forward so that more people can be benefited.

Based on Li Ka Shing’s contribution in educational projects and reforms, he illustrates how a transformational leader should lead. Peter G. Northouse explains in the book Leadership theory and practice (2010), that transformation is “a process that changes and transforms people”. Transformational leaders concern with how to inspire people to come up with values, ethics, standards and their long term goals, as well as assessing their motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings (Northouse, 2010). A leader, such as Li Ka Shing, acts as strong role models for other peoples to emulate. It becomes a process of leadership challenge by James M. Kouzes, and Barry Z. Posner, an idea that Northouse introduces in his book, which it begins with modeling the way, follows by inspiring a shared vision, challenging
the process, enabling others to act, and finally encouraging the heart which implants a long-term change in people’s mind and their contribution to the society by the values they create and carry out (Northouse, 2010). A true leader should not focus on short-term gain of an organization, yet he/she should think big in influencing people to bring a difference to the current situation. Li models the way by continuing to self-study even he has not finished his official elementary school studies. He shares the vision that education is the foundation of success, only with knowledge can a person being able to make wise decisions in all aspects in life. The foundation of LKSF is a way that Li Ka Shing enables others to take part in his charity project, in order to achieve the purpose of encouraging the hearts of people who will help him to spread the idea of helping others while asking nothing in return.

The “giving” culture is the central idea of Li’s principles when he leads the Foundation and his companies. When more people get benefited from LKSF, more people return to work for Li Ka Shing’s companies, as a way to pay back to Li, or to show their respects to him. Li has successfully escaped from the “behavior traps” introduced by Robert H. Schaffer (2010), which he is able to set proper expectations and never wait for others to prepare. Li is the one who help himself and other people to prepare. Schaffer claims that endless preparation gives the illusion of progress (2010), but nothing can be worked out. If an organization demands helpful staff, it is a good idea to begin from education, which can give people opportunities to cultivate their talents so that they can bring positive contributions to an organization in the future.

With similar ideas of “Innovation’s Holy Grail” by C.K. Prahalad and R.A. Mashelkar (2010), there is a shift within an organization from premium pricing and abundance to affordability and sustainability of innovation. Although the idea was talking about how a company can gain more profits by offering their products to more people at lower prices, while
that the same time developing a variety of products and services with decreasing resources (Prahalad, 2010), it is applicable to Li’s social business. The profits of Li’s social business can be defined as the educated people benefited from LKSF. Li Ka Shing and LKSF offers education as a product to more people at a lower cost, while at the same time providing people with different ways to learn, which is not limited to studying in classrooms. It also complies with three types of “Gandhian Innovation” concluded in Prahalad and Mashelkar’s article (2010) that the practice of these innovations creates a future with disrupted business models; modified organizational capabilities, or created new capabilities for organizations. Li has helped people to create possibilities to the future, which becomes a future with innovations, creativities, and encouragements. It is a focus on people, not just shareholder wealth and profits (Prahalad, 2010). Li has successfully developed a culture of commitment to serving the unserved, and helping them to contribute their own efforts to the society.

Li Ka Shing has displayed his visionary and inspirational strategies to influence people as a great transformational leader. His leadership places a strong emphasis on people’s needs and values, and provides a broader view of how a leader can change his followers, and so to the society. Leadership is a process that occurs between followers and leaders (Northouse, 2010), which is an exchange of ideas, and a form of imperceptible communications which can bring long-term effects that gradually alter the construction of society in a way which is not measurable by numbers and profits. It concurs with Li’s wishes as he wants “to be able to contribute to society and to help those in need to build a better life,” that is also the ultimate meaning in life, and he would gladly consider this to be his life’s work (LKSF, 2012). It is an approach which can guide people to a world where each person is willing to help others and contribute their strengths to wherever they are needed, as a result the influence can be carried on.
References


APA Paper 2:  
Operation Gratitude: A Reflection on Leadership Practices and Organizational Behaviors

Abstract

This paper discusses how the service project, Operation Gratitude, helps to define a new meaning to the word “leadership”. Leaders inspire people to do things differently, and to ultimately create a better future. New leadership theories determine that leadership is more people-oriented than task-oriented; therefore, it is a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach. These indicate that in order to bring a long term change in an organization, it is the first priority to get people motivated and help them find a meaning to do certain things. Leading from the inside out is the core competency of effective leaders (Cameron & Green, 2008). It is the ability for a leader to inspire the need for a change and to gather human power to make a difference. The literatures reviewed provide information supporting this idea, which the key of leadership is to spread the influence so that the inspiration of change continues to exist and integrate.
Introduction

The term “leadership” is often related to business organizations, and is easily confused with “boss” and “orders”. In spite of this, leadership can happen anywhere, when there is inspiration and change. Learning from the service project of volunteering for Operation Gratitude, it can be summarized that a new type of leadership can be described as a bottom-up approach, which is opposite to the traditional “lead and follow”, or top-down approach. This means, to be specific, that leadership happens when a group of people are sharing the same value and vision, and are empowered to act in a way that would generate a huge influence which can lead to a change. The change will become long-term if people keep creating small wins and if they can keep up the good work. In other words, the key of leadership is to spread the influence so that the inspiration of change continues to exist and integrate.

Review of Literature

In Making Good: Finding Meaning, Money, and Community in a Changing World, Billy Parish and Dev Aujla give suggestions on how people can use their talent and their calling to, “rethink old systems, uplift the downtrodden, and bring new light and new ideas into this world” (2012). It is the new generation’s time to bring a change to the world, by taking a stand even when other people think that it is wrong (Parish & Aujla, 2012). They comment that people need to keep listening and adapting, but not abandon their vision and the approach they want to try when no one agree with their ideas. They summarize the action plan into six steps: reflect, adapt, connect, design, launch, and organize, which can allow people to change and thus change the world (Parish & Aujla, 2012). This is a step-by-step approach that when people reflect their
opinions, they may arouse some echoes, and thus inspire an action plan to gradually make something different.

To be specific, William Bridges introduces three phases which occur throughout the change process in his book, *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change* (2003). A change involves, “ending – neutral zone – new beginning,” that in order to reorient and renew people when there are changes around them, people need to learn to let go, to re-pattern, and to make a new beginning (Bridges, 2003). When introducing a change, Bridges says that the first priority is to “sell the problem” that forced the changes, which increases the sense of urgency for a change (2003). This problem-selling strategy is effective because it can pinpoint a specific focus which needs innovations.

It is important to have a leader to guide a change, who can inspire people, and motivate them to put together their efforts into a force that make a difference to the current situation. In *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations* (2012), James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner describes that leaders are those who get people moving and, “change is the province of leaders. It is the work of leaders to inspire people to do things differently, to struggle against uncertain odds, and to persevere toward a misty image of a better future” (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Leaders, “transform values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into solidarity, and risks into rewards” (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). A transformational leadership creates the circumstances in which people turn challenging opportunities into remarkable successes (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). A great leader clarifies a shared value which allows others to follow, and help people to envision the future of what they can achieve. People get together and search for opportunities to make a change. They develop competence and confidence, build a relationship of trust, and recognize the contributions
of each person. They also recall that leadership is everyone’s business, and each individual plays an important role to influence others to make extraordinary things happen (Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

**Analysis**

It is commonly accepted that leadership has to be a set of rules and people have to follow them strictly. However, as Thomas J. Sergiovanni (1992) mentions in his book, *Moral Leadership*, that less leadership is more leadership. He holds the idea that, “the more we are able to integrate substitute models (for leadership) into school, the more likely it is that teachers and others will become self-managed” (Sergiovanni, 1992). This theory can also be applied to organizations other than schools, where a shared leadership or empowerment is the trend of changing leadership style. It is more important to enlighten people finding their own paths to achieve the common goal of a community, rather than to lead without encouraging people’s hearts. Instead of giving guidelines for others to follow, setting the example is a better way to lead because people first listen to the talk and watch the walk, followed by measuring the congruence (Kouzes & Posner, 1999). If a person cannot walk the talk, any leadership theories cannot be put into practice.

When talking about how to lead a change, John P. Kotter and Dan S. Cohen (2002) discuss about a new dynamic – the “see – feel – change” dynamic in their book, *The Heard of Change*. When people see the leader as a role model, they will feel the difference which can be brought from a change, and which will lead a change. The “see – feel” process is to give people a feeling of involvement within an organization, which Kouzes and Posner explain that when people are proud with what they are doing within the organization, serving its purpose, they will
find it meaningful to do so and the feeling of making sense of what they do will encourage them to become ambassadors to the outside world (2012). This concept is opposite of the traditional thoughts about leadership and fellowship. It has been shown that people usually get less involved when they take an order to carry things out. However, if they are motivated to carry out a task in their own way, they are more enthusiastic to do their best in order to finish the task sooner, and in a better way, which will lead to a change.

*Operation Gratitude*, a volunteer group which sends care packages to U.S. military, is gathering the efforts from the general public, and the volunteers to materialize our appreciations to the troops. The idea is to send our appreciations and thanks in care packages, so that they can feel the warmth from their home country. Although the soldiers are deployed in foreign based, they are never forgotten by the ones whom they are protecting. *Operation Gratitude* provides volunteer opportunities for people to help making, sorting, and packing the care packages. Items such as hand knitted scarves, bracelets, letters, candies, books, and essential supplies, etc. are packed and sent to hundred thousands of heroes overseas. These packages bring the message of, “Thank you! You are never forgotten” to the army troops, as people always remember that they provide the security allowing Americans to lead their lives as they choose and their children to follow their dreams.

Taking the service project as an example, *Operation Gratitude* has made ordinary tasks extraordinary, because it gives a meaning to the tasks. When preparing the care packages for the troops, people need to think what the soldiers need from their home country, what should be included in the package so that they can feel the message of, “we care about you and we want to thank you”. Writing letters, sorting supplies such as dietary supplements and candies suddenly make sense, when the purpose of doing so is to say “thank you” to the military serving overseas.
Thanks to the military, who ensures hundreds millions of Americans’ safety, and ensure us to live a life without worries. The troops are the ones who are defending for our country, who enable us to live with a peace of mind. All of them have families in the United States, and they sacrificed the time to spend with their families, in order to ensure the safety of our country, our people. Their contributions demonstrate the characteristics as a leader, by which they act as a role model for the general public, showing what Americans can do for their country. Moreover, the troops create cohesion for the Americans to acknowledge their efforts, and influence the Americans to feel that they have to do something for the troops spontaneously. When we are celebrating good harvest, giving thanks to God for events favorable to their causes, shall we not forget our responsible and diligent army troops who cannot come back and gather with their families? We want them to know that Americans remember them and thank them for their works.

Throughout the service project of Operation Gratitude, it has also shown that authentic leadership can influence people to feel the need to make a change voluntarily. Moreover, it is learned that every individual is important to the organization, that their contributions make extraordinary things happen.

The actions taken by Operation Gratitude demonstrate one of the seven essential practices introduced in Kouzes and Posner’s book, Encouraging the Heart, that they inspire volunteer helpers to personalize recognitions to each individual soldier by writing each of them a unique thank you letter. It would be easier for the organization to print a standard thank you cards and throw it into each package. However, they choose to have each card hand-written by volunteers, which also show our respects to each of the soldiers. People who receive the cards will feel different, knowing that the care packages are not the products of mass productions. This is the best way to show the respects from volunteers, and from people whom the troops are
Leadership is not about a position or a place, but about gathering and making use of each individual’s uniqueness, to come up with an attitude and a sense of responsibility for making a difference (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). It is a two-way interaction that both the troops and the volunteers of the service project learn from each other and transform into authentic leaders.

**Conclusion**

Leading from the inside out is the core competency of effective leaders (Cameron & Green, 2008). It is the ability for a leader to inspire the need for a change, and motivate people to gather their power and as a result to make a difference. It is not just the leader’s vision which can induce a change, but a shared vision created by people of an organization does. From the service project of helping *Operation Gratitude*, we see the impact of how a move from a small group of people with shared vision can eventually generate influential cohesion of a large group. The experience of doing the service project demonstrates the beginning of the heart of change – to make people feel differently (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Only with the realization of love and truth, a person will lead to a leadership that is sustainable.
References


Critical Textbook Critiques

1. Kouzes and Posner in their book *Leadership Challenge* list several leadership competencies to be an effective leader. Critically examine the relevance of these competencies for leading modern organizations. Then examine the role of challenges—crucibles—in shaping one’s leadership style. Discuss briefly some examples of such challenges/crucibles in your own life as a leader and/or in the life of a leader you would consider your personal hero.

From the book *The Leadership Challenge* (Kouzers & Posner, 2012), it has been discussed that a leader should model the way; inspire a shared vision; challenge the process; enable others to act; and the last practice is to encourage the heart. These competencies are relevant to leading modern organizations as human capital is the most valuable assets of a company nowadays. Profit making may be the ultimate goal of a company, which is not deniable. However, the old practices of giving a hard time for employees to boost up sales and give harsh instructions to meet the deadline no longer work for the modern organizations. Studies have shown that people are more productive when they feel motivated and when they feel that they are adding value to the organization. Among the five practices, enabling others to act plays a significantly important part as it talks about how we gather people’s efforts, foster collaboration, and eventually strengthen others, and also the organization. If a modern organization does not go through these steps, it will be hard for it to achieve true leadership.

However, it is not always clear to define a person as a leader. There are occasions that a team of people are influencing each other, instead of a leader-followers situation. Also, it is hard to visualize the practices, as we may not be able to notice that we are actually carrying out the practices listed. There are crucibles in shaping one’s leadership style. Only when there is a leadership, its style can be measured. When people are looking for a leadership style which is suitable for the one’s personality or organizational goal, only assessments such as personality tests can be used to determine the most suitable answer, which is not always correct. Moreover, people may not always have opportunities to develop a leadership style, depending on the work nature of the person in an organization. If people are used to worked individually, such as working at home, it may be hard to determine a leadership style because human interaction is lacked.

As a leader at work, I found that it was difficult for me to define myself as a leader or a co-worker. This is because I would like build a good relationship with my fellow workers, but it also brought me to the problems that they do not tend to listen to my ideas seriously. All of them have their own thoughts and do not want to share to others, or listen from others. Leadership barely existed, or leadership exists in each persons at my workplace. The major challenge for me was to help them understanding that when working together, the outcomes would always exceeds the efforts they have put into the task. As a result, enabling others to act is the challenge and at the same time the crucible for me as a leader, and I feel rewarding when seeing my co-workers willing to contribute their strengths and work as a team to create the best results for each project.
2. According to Gary Hamel, the current management model based on command and control is no longer valid in a world driven by creativity and innovation. Based on your readings, identify five practices to turn an organization into a serial management innovator. Cite and discuss the example of an organization that incorporates these innovation strategies into their operational activities.

Based on the readings on *What Matters Now* by Gary Hamel (2012), especially the part about Apple as an innovator, the five practices to turn an organization into a serial management innovator can be summarized as follow:

1. **Be Passionate.** “Great success is the product of a great passion; it arises from the tireless and inventive pursuit of a noble ideal” and to take joyous pride when presenting the product, dedicating itself to the pursuit of an exceptional ideal.
2. **Lead, Don’t Follow.** “Always set itself the challenge of radically redefining the status quo”.
3. **Aim to Surprise.** Commit to exceeding expectations to wringing little gasps of delight from even its most jaded customers.
4. **Sweat the Details.** “It’s about getting all of the tiny things right that conspire together to make a product truly exceptional”.
5. **Think Like an Engineer, Feel Like an Artist.** “A company can’t produce beautiful products if bean counters win every argument” and “hyper-rational executives produce ultra-boring products”. An organization has to be innovation-friendly and customer-centric in order to stand out from the crowd of competitors.

Taking Woodbury University as an example, innovation and creativity have been put to the top of the University’s principles list, and the Management and Organizational Behavior class has demonstrated how innovative a class could be. It is undoubtedly that both the teacher and students are passionate about taking the class and contribute to the discussions. We were always excited about what would be shared during the class time, and we loved to express our opinions. This is how each of us giving value to the class.

The class is also looking for opportunity to change and improve, which can be seen from the changing format of project. Instead of the original book report session, we redefine the meaning of the project into a way that we could do something to the community. It was an extraordinary experience to go out and work with team members on exceptional things which was not limited by the classroom. If we chose to follow the traditional way of doing the project, we would not have the chance to gain such valuable experience. Personally, I feel that there were surprises throughout the class. From the readings and videos, to the sharing of takeaways from the books, articles, and video clips. We kept having surprise since each of us shared amazing insights which the others might never think in that way. In addition, each of us is always getting all of the tiny
things together to make our “product” exceptional. The “Leader vs. Managers” mind mapping exercise was the best example to prove this, as each of us put a tiny part and it came out to become so completed and well defined about the difference and relationship between those two words. The syllabus of the course acts as a gatekeeper setting constraints for the class. However, we had the freedom to add inspirations to the class, which makes the class unique. This is how I interpret the class which has the characteristics of thinking like an engineer, and feeling like an artist. Overall, this class is the most innovative class that I have ever taken, which also demonstrate that as an innovator, it has turned an organization into a serial management innovator with the five practices listed above.

3. During the course of this class, we heard presentations on the leadership/success secrets of such companies as Starbucks Coffee, GE, Southwest Airlines, Tom of Maine, Herman Miller, Microsoft, and others. We also heard management recipes from management scholars and gurus such as Peter Drucker, Henry Mintzberg, Jack Welsh, Tom Peters, and Steven Covey. Choose one such presentation and critically examine its recommendation. You do not have to agree with what the author says and/or with the viewpoints of the presenting team. However, your position should be well-grounded conceptually and should present a “reflective response” as opposed to a “reactive response.”

Peter Ferdinand Drucker (November 19, 1909 - November 11, 2005) was a writer, teacher, management consultant, and self-described "social ecologist". Although we did not discuss much about him in class, I have researched some of his viewpoints about management and business ethics. From his books The Practice of Management (Drucker, 1993) and The Five Most Important Questions You Will Ever Ask about Your Organization (Drucker, 2008), Drucker believed that employees deserve respects that they are assets to a company. Knowledgeable workers are the essential ingredients of the modern economy. The central idea of this view is that human factors are essential to an organization, and that a manager’s job is to help the employees to get prepared to work out the tasks, and also to empower them to do so (Drucker, 2008). Also, early in Drucker’s career, he mentioned the importance of community. He predicted the “end of economic man” and introduced the idea of a “plant community” where an individual’s social needs could be met. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, these needs include the needs for belonging, love, affection, friendship and family. Drucker later committed that the plant community had never been carried out successfully. By the 1980s, Drucker suggested that volunteering in the non-profit organizations was the essentials to fostering a healthy society and people could create a sense of belonging and civic pride to the community. From the experience of the service project, I agree that volunteer works can build people’s sense of belonging to the community, and which will lead to constructing a healthy society.
In managing a business, Drucker believed that it is very important to balance a variety of needs and goals, rather than focusing on a single value about profit making. He commented that profit is essential for the company’s continuity, but its primary responsibility is to serve its customers. An organization should have a proper way of carrying out its business processes in all aspects (Drucker, 1993), and great companies should be able to “stand among humankind’s noblest inventions” (Drucker, 2008).

From my point of view, growing up in a traditional Chinese family has provided me with certain kinds of ethical thinking, which are sometimes in contradiction. There is a Chinese idiom saying that “Look out for yourself, or heaven and earth will combine to destroy you. Every man for himself, and the Devil take the hindmost,” which means that if you do not put yourself at the very first place, you would not get what you need. On the other hand, I was taught to be considerate, which is very similar to one of the quick ethical tests mentioned in Business Ethics: A Stakeholder & Issues Management Approach by Joseph W. Weiss. “The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” (Weiss, 2001). Its idea is to put oneself into a condition to consider what the other side will feel before we make a decision or perform an act. We should not knowingly harm others as we do not want others to harm us and this is also an idea taught by Confucius. He taught us to treat others as if we would treat ourselves in the same way, and if we do not want to be treated in that way, we should not do that onto others. This has influenced me a lot, since I always think about others on how they want me to be, and what should I do in order to fit their expectations. However, when it comes to a situation that a third party is involved, meeting one’s expectation might harm the third party. In reality, it is sometimes hard for us to draw a clear line between things, and hard to define which is right and which is wrong. There is always an opportunity cost for us to forego when we choose to do something in a certain way. As what Drucker states, that we have to find a balance between needs and goals, which is true for balancing rights and wrongs, and to balance the benefits of different people. It is also true that people are the most valuable assets of a business, which we should always respect each other.

4. Comment on Neil Pasricha’s presentation of “The 3 A’s of awesome”, and discuss what do you think that are awesome about this class.

When watching the video about Neil Pasricha’s presentation, I was impressed by how he overcame the tough times during his life. He did not give up even when he felt his life was full of darkness when his wife and his best friend left him one by one. I think the reason why Pasricha was able to get over from these is because he has faith in his life. He found a meaning for himself, about the 3 A’s of awesome, to prove to himself that life is always awesome, as long as we can find out the precious moments.
There are many times that things are awesome, but we just did not have a chance to notice that. Similar to what Pasricha did, I began to spend time on thinking “What is it over the last few class meetings that helped me grow myself?” After watching the video, I agreed that it is time for me to take a step back and to take a good look at things happening around me. I noticed that I have missed so many treasurable moments which I should have paid attention on. Only with awareness, we can discover the beauty of life. During the class, I found out that we could come up with a nice mind map which was so unique that no one else could create the same picture as what we did. At the beginning, it did not sound comfortable for us to begin with the drawing as we had no idea on how to start. However, when each of us left our seats and draw a smart part, it eventually turned into a meaningful picture, clarifying ideas about what we have learned about the differences between managers and leaders.

Talking about Authenticity, I believe that I am what I am, people can choose to accept me or reject me, but I am still me. This may sound stubborn as I seem not willing to change no matter how people think about me. However, apart from right and wrong, I believe that I have the right to choose what kind of person I want myself to become. I am free to express what I like and what I do not like. I am made up of many strengths and weaknesses. Authenticity means to me that I should not deny the parts of myself which are not good enough. Instead, I will accept them as components to make who I am. Nowadays, there are still many prejudices and discriminations which make people hesitate to express their true feelings. I feel that if I want to be authentic, I should be the first one to accept every part of myself, so that others can see the real me.

In addition to Awareness and Authenticity, the third A of awesome for me refers to “Appreciation”. As learned from several readings about leadership, including the books required for this class, and the reference books used for the APA papers, “appreciation” or “personalize recognitions” for the contributions people made keep appearing in the writings. It is when people are appreciated, they get motivated to keep up the good works. When we are motivated by the appreciations, we are at the same time motivating others to do the right and meaningful things. This is a cycle that will never stop and will create a better future for the world.
Reference


Key Leadership Insights

I learned a lot from the Management and Organizational Behavior class, that this is truly a world-class learning experience. A leader should be considerate, understand the need of other people, and help them to cope with problems. As Desmond Tutu said, “Without forgiveness, there is no future,” this is one of the most inspirational leadership insights I learned in this class. It implies that no one is perfect, and we should always give people chance to learn from mistakes. Life is always about learning, it does not matter if we do something wrong. However, it is very important for us to learn from the mistake we make and improve it in the future so that we will never make the same mistake again.

In addition, I learned that every occasion is like one of the dots in a line, you never know how things are related until a line forms and you will find the dots which construct the line. Everything happens with/for a reason, and we will understand it eventually. When you follow the path, things will make sense to happen together when you look back in the future.

I also learned from the service project that we do not need to wait for people who need help to ask for help. Instead, we should actively look for opportunities to contribute to the community. It is about belonging to the community because social responsibility is to be built throughout experiences of serving the unserved.

Last but not least, I learned about the 3A’s of awesome, which are attitude, awareness, and authenticity. We have the attitude pointing to the right direction, and we are aware of what we should do, and when we act things out, we become authentic. Action is always more important and influential than words, that people will be more willing to follow a role model.
100 Day Leadership Implementation Plan

The top three takeaways regarding leading change are:

1. Leadership is about what will be, about discover the new system, about develop human talent, horizon, effectiveness, and leaders do right thing.

2. The first job of leader is to define reality, and inspire people to get things done enthusiastically. The second thing that a leader does is to say “Thank you”.

3. It is more important for us to look at the internal instead of external things as we want to feel appreciated. Appreciation and the sense of satisfaction are the motivators which make people enjoy their works.

In the coming 100 days, I will have the chance to start all over again, in the means that I can re-think my values, my passions, and how am I going to apply what I have learned in this class to real life working environment in the first month when I have the winter break. I will then apply what I have come up with beginning from the spring semester. I hope to show that I have improvements regarding leading changes which I apply to my work and studies.

Ethical issues were never considered seriously at work for me. This does not mean that we can do whatever we like to, no matter if it is moral or not. However, I have never thought of how to contribute to the society while we are making profits at the same time. There is a huge difference between not to do bad and to do good. After taking this class, I learned to think in a broader way that life is not about making money, but to learn from and contribute to the community to give values to what we do. To be specific, I learned not to focus on what I have done for others, but what others have done for me. I will always be thankful for everything happens around me, no matter it is good or bad, because each occasion will give me a chance to learn and improve myself.

Regarding leading change, I can now distinguish the difference between management and leadership. Leadership is much more to deal with how to motivate people about commitment and enjoy their work by acting as a role model. It is to deal with consequences in the future, while management is to deal with what happens in present. A true leader acts as an example for people to follow, it is not necessary for a leader to pass on an idea by word-of-mouth.
~THE END~